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STEEL PLANTS MAINTAIN ECONOMY DRIVE; BLAST FURNACE PRODUCTIVITY BELOW PLAN

/Numbers in parentheses refer to appended list of sources./

In July and the first half of August, ferrous metallurgy plants continued their drive for increased output and improved technology, but placed particular stress on savings of fuel and production materials. The Ministry of the Metallurgical Industry was criticized for certain shortcomings of its administrations and plants.

In the second quarter, for example, the established plan for the coefficient of capacity blast-furnace utilization was not achieved by the ministry's enterprises.(1)

Workers at the Taganrog Metallurgical Plant imeni Andreyev, in a letter to the editor of Trud, write that many basic and justifiable complaints can be made against the Ministry of the Metallurgical Industry and the Central Committee of the Trade Union of Metallurgical Industry Workers. The advanced work methods proposed by workers both at the Taganrog Plant and at the Plant imeni Karl Libknekht in Nizhnedneprovsk are not made known to the other plant, although both are under the jurisdiction of the same main administration, "Glavtrubostal'" (Main Administration of the Steel Pipe Rolling Industry). The experiences of the leaders in the recent all-Union competition among metallurgical industry workers have not yet been widely disseminated throughout the industry. Steelworkers at the Taganrog Plant almost never find out the methods by which high steel production records have been made at the Magnitogorsk Combine and the "Serp i molot" Plant. The Taganrog workers' achievements in introducing cost accounting on the brigade level, while known to the main administration, the ministry, and the trade union, have not had the support of these organizations.(2)

In the drive for increased output, blast-furnace workers at the Kuznetsk Combine, Kemerovo Oblast, have increased pig-iron smelting 13.5 percent in 7 months of 1950 as compared with the same period of 1949. The combine has successfully completed both the July and the 7-month plan for the entire production cycle. Workers are competing to adopt the new progressive norms.(3) In August, workers at blast furnace No 4 brought the coefficient for capacity

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utilization of the furnace to 0.83 as compared with the progressive norm of 0.87.(4) New high-quality refractory materials are being used in the roof of open-hearth furnace No 5. Chamotte checkerwork instead of Dinas brick is also being used in this furnace. The checkerwork has already withstood 439 melts and is still in use.(5)

The high-speed melts at the Moscow "Serp i molot" Plant have been achieved mostly through a speed-up in charging the furnaces. This has put extra demands on the railroad shop, requiring considerably more carloads of materials in the same amount of time as before and a faster passage of the cars on the track. The efforts of the loaders to decrease the time spent in loading and unloading by means of socialist competition were not sufficient, even though they decreased the time by half. The mechanization bureau then developed a number of devices which sharply decreased car-loading and unloading time. The railroad shop was awarded first place in the all-Union competition by decree of the Ministry of the Metallurgical Industry and the VTsSPS (Vsesoyuznyy Tsentral'nyy Sovet Professional'nykh Soyuzov, All-Union Central Soviet of Trade Unions).(6)

The "Elektrostal'" Plant in Moscow has exceeded the 7-month plans for steel smelting and output of finished rolled metal.(7)

On 16 August, the Moscow Hard Alloys Combine shipped out several truckloads of boxes, filled for the most part with parts used in the production of cutting tools for high-speed metalworking, to be sent by mail to its consumers. The combine recently stepped up its shipments of products for mines, trusts, and enterprises of the Ministry of the Coal Industry. More than 20 packages were sent to the machine-building plant of this ministry in Gorlovka. Several packages were sent to Karaganda, Druzhkovka, Tkvarcheli, and other points. Included in the shipped products were several thousand cylindrical centers for drill bits, many blades made of hard alloys, and other parts.(8)

A complex brigade, headed by Engineer Goncharov, at the combine was responsible for the development of the new alloy, VK-2, for high-speed cutting of cast iron. At first, the conservatism of the combine's department of technical control kept the new alloy from making much headway, but due to the effect of work done by the party organization, output of the new alloy is now on the increase. A high-speed lathe operator at the Moscow Grinding Machine Plant recently set a new record for high-speed cutting of cast iron in using the new alloy.

Automatic pressing has become an important problem for the combine. An automatic press, designed by brigade of innovators, substitutes for the work of seven workers, increases labor productivity, and considerably increases the quality of alloys. The entire combine is now working to introduce complete automatization of pressing in the immediate future.(9)

Workers at open-hearth furnace No 5 of the new open-hearth shop of the Vyksa Metallurgical Plant, Gor'kiy Oblast, have been particularly successful in early August, completing many high-speed and heavy-weight melts. In the old open-hearth shop, melts are being completed in 6 hours as compared with the norm of 8 hours.(10)

High-speed operations have also been successful at the Latvian "Krasnyy metallurg" Plant in Liyepaya. A leading steelworker there completed a melt in 5 hours 20 minutes as compared with the norm of 6 hours.(11)

In the South, a new record for steel production has been set at the Makeyevka Metallurgical Plant imeni Kirov. One steelworker completed a high-speed melt with a production of 8.37 tons of steel per square meter of hearth as compared with the progressive norm of 5.5 tons. At blast furnace No 3, the average coefficient for capacity utilization of the furnace is now 0.68 as compared with the planned 0.89.(12)

This year, the Makeyevka Plant has started production of ten new profiles for use in the production of automotive combines, plows, seeders, and other agricultural machines. The plant has also begun to produce steel for window casements on order from the builders of the high buildings in Moscow. The first 300 tons of steel have already been shipped to the Moscow University project.(13)

The Dnepropetrovsk metallurgical plants are now producing various types of consumers' goods, such as window fastenings and nickel-plated furniture from pipe, rolled metal, and sheet-iron cuttings which were formerly used for resmelting in open-hearth furnaces. The Plant imeni Petrovskiy has set up a shop for producing window and door fittings from waste products of the rolling shops. This year, the plant has produced 2½ million rubles' worth of locks, window and door handles and knobs, fastenings, and other products. The plant imeni Lenin has produced 4½ million rubles' worth of three-quarter and double nicket-plated beds. Since the beginning of the year, metallurgical enterprises in Dnepropetrovsk have produced 20 million rubles' worth of household goods for consumers.(14)

The Bessemer shop of the Plant imeni Dzerzhinskiy has started production of rail steel. The iron-rolling, section-rolling, and new rolling shops have started production of new rolled products for machine building.(15) Steelworkers at the plant's open-hearth furnace No 8, open-hearth shop No 2, are now obtaining 9.5 tons of steel per square meter of hearth. A high-speed melt in this furnace takes 5 hours 35 minutes. In shop No 1, a steelworker is currently obtaining 8 tons per square meter of hearth as compared with the norm of 5.77 of tons.(16) This shop completed its 6-month plan on 14 July. Since the beginning the year, the shop has saved more than 1,500 tons of fuel, sufficient for an additional 165 heavy-weight melts.(5)

In July, steel production of the open-hearth shop of the Plant imeni K. Libknekht was up 6 percent over June. The plant has completed the 7-month plan for the entire metallurgical cycle.(16) Pipe-rolling workers completed the 7-month plan by 27 July and started producing large-diameter pipe toward the August plan. In the second shift, a brigade increased the hourly productivity of the mill to 15.8 tons of pipe, which considerably exceeds the new progressive norm. Each ton of pipe rolled by the shop in July was nearly 100 rubles cheaper than called for in the plan.(17)

Steelworkers at the Dnepropetrovsk Plant imeni Petrovskiy are learning to account for every kilogram of raw material used in the smelting process. They have begun to save on molten pig iron by increasing the volume of scrap and pressed fagots (press-paket) in the charge. They operate the furnace at maximum temperatures, and during the process of smelting draw off as much slag as possible, which helps to speed the heating of the charge and the melt itself.(18)

At the Taganrog Metallurgical Plant imeni Andreyev, Rostov Oblast, the introduction of complex mechanization of cold open-hearth furnace repair decreased the idleness of the furnace for this repair by half. In 1947, when mechanization of repair was given little attention, idleness constituted 11.7 percent of the calendar time, whereas in 1948, when partial mechanization was instituted, idleness was reduced to 9.8 percent. Then, in 1949, as the result of complex mechanization, idleness was reduced to 5.4 percent. The schedule for cold repair in 1949 extended over 4 days as compared with 8 days in 1947 and 6 days in 1948.(19)

A new heating schedule has been instituted in the operation of open-hearth furnace No 1, shop No 3, of the Magnitogorsk Combine. This is the furnace operated by the three Stakhanovites who started the current industry-wide competition for savings in fuel and materials. The consumption of coke gas per hour has been set as follows (cubic meters): charging, 5,000; heating the charge,

4,000; melting the pig iron, 3,500; smelting, 2,500; final melting, 3,500. From the 81st melt on, the consumption of coke gas is increased 500 cubic meters. Consumption of blast-furnace gas at this furnace is 5,000 cubic meters per hour. In addition, in all periods of the melt (except for repairing the furnace), tar is added to the furnace. After the pig iron is melted, the consumption of coke gas is sharply decreased. The furnace is equipped with an automatic mechanism for shutting of the supply of tar and cutting of the gas while the valves are reversed. The furnace workers have cut down on the consumption of raw materials and fuel, saving 446,611 rubles, including 218,000 rubles' worth in 2 months. But at the same time, they permitted great overconsumption of scrap and waste products -- 228,611 rubles' worth. Since scrap is cheaper than molten pig iron, they consume more of it than is called for in the norm. Often they substitute the cheaper cuttings and sheet scrap for lump scrap. The most important parts of the furnace are repaired with magnesite, while the less important are built up with dolomite. In this way, they reduced the consumption of repair materials by 2 kilograms per ton of smelted steel. In April, May, and June, the furnace produced 3,750 tons of steel above plan and the steel output increased by 3 tons per square meter of hearth above the norm.(5)

Magnitogorsk blast-furnace operators have also found new methods of increasing the furnace productivity. Recently, blast furnace No 6 was converted to operation at increased gas pressure. In addition to increasing the furnace productivity, the new method has cut the loss of flue dust. As a result, three foremen in one half month smelted 1,600 tons of metal above plan and saved, at the same time, 70,000 rubles' worth of ore and coke.(2)

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